

GOOD THINGS HAPPENING IN OUR ECONOMY

Congressman Greg Gianforte (Mont., At-Large)

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I thank the gentleman from Arizona for leading this effort. It is a pleasure for me to share with this body the benefits Montanans are seeing from tax reform.

It's been six months since President Trump signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act into law, and we're already seeing the results. The benefits of the tax cuts aren't a theory. I see it when I meet with Montanans throughout the state.

Paychecks are growing. Montana businesses are making investments and creating jobs. In fact, since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law in December, one million new jobs have been created, the national unemployment rate matches a 49-year low, and Montana's unemployment rate has dropped. America's economic growth is exceeding expectations.

Hardworking Montanans across the state – whether at a UPS facility in Missoula, at Big Sky Wholesale Seeds in Shelby, or at Billings Flying Service – have told me their paychecks have grown thanks to tax reform.

The owner of 11 fast food restaurants throughout Montana told me in Great Falls that he was giving his employees pay raises and increasing starting wages for new employees.

A teacher in Billings told me her monthly paycheck has grown by \$130.

Mr. Speaker, certain leaders have described the benefits from tax reform – whether bonuses or larger paychecks – as just crumbs. Just crumbs. Tell that to the teacher in Billings who will keep nearly \$1,600 more of her hard-earned money each year.

According to a recent survey, small business optimism has reached another record high. That confidence is translating to investments and more jobs.

The owner of Westland Seed in Ronan reports he is hiring more people because of tax reform. At a roundtable discussion about agriculture in Bozeman, a local farmer and food processor said tax reform contributed to his decision to double his staff from six to 12. Senior officials at a Boeing facility in Helena indicate they will add 20 new employees this year.

Montana small businesses credit tax reform for their decisions to expand. At a roundtable with women small business owners in Bozeman, one entrepreneur said the new tax policies were a big part of her decision to launch two new businesses this year.

Other Montana businesses are making investments thanks to tax reform. Loenbro, a Great Falls industrial construction and manufacturing company that employs more than 600 workers, said tax reform immediately added 15 percent to its bottom line. Tax reform is leading them to increase worker benefits, enhance training programs, and invest in construction equipment that will create new jobs.

Billings Flying Service credits the full expensing provision for its decision to purchase new equipment. The company is also investing in new research and development for enhanced firefighting equipment.

In addition to larger paychecks, increased investment, greater small business confidence, and more good-paying jobs, more than 87 million utility customers are seeing lower energy prices. Utility companies cite tax reform as the reason they're reducing their rates. Montanans are among those benefiting. According to recent reports, NorthWestern Energy and Montana-Dakota Utilities have proposed cutting their rates thanks to the new tax law.

Mr. Speaker, certain leaders in this chamber warned that tax reform was “Armageddon.” I don’t know any hardworking Montanans who would agree that keeping more of their hard-earned money is “Armageddon.” Or that job creation is Armageddon. Or that small businesses succeeding is Armageddon. Or that a lower utility bill is Armageddon.

Tax reform isn’t producing crumbs. Tax reform isn’t leading to Armageddon. Mr. Speaker, tax reform is working in Montana.

I thank the gentleman from Arizona, and with that, I yield back.